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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 006730

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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL  
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2006

#### In Today's Papers

Erdogan and Gul to go to Turkmenistan for Niyazov's Funeral  
All papers report that PM Erdogan and FM Gul will attend the funeral ceremony of the Turkmenistan President Saparmurad Niyazov on Sunday. It is not yet clear whether President Sezer will attend the ceremony. Some Turkish officials expressed concerns that the death of the Turkmen leader could cause chaos in the country.

Turkey Linked to Enfal Massacre in Northern Iraq  
Sabah, Cumhuriyet, Hurriyet, Zaman and others report that a document linking Turkey to the massacre of 180,000 Kurdish civilians in 1998 in Anfal, was read by a Shiite prosecutor in the Iraqi court trying Saddam Hussein. The prosecutor claimed that Saddam Hussein wrote to Turkey and asked for the extradition of a group of Kurdish leaders. FM Gul said that Turkey always stood with Iraqi Kurds and gave instructions to the MFA to look into the allegation. Meanwhile, Koksall Sonmez, Turkish Ambassador to Baghdad in 1986-1990, said that Saddam was planning to force Kurds towards Turkey and catch them between two fires to liquidate them. Turkey, however, immediately rejected the plan and Saddam pushed the button for the Anfal massacre.

#### Commentary on Iraq

Haluk Ulman, writing in the economic-political daily Dunya, is pessimistic about prospects for peace in 2007: "The New Year always comes with hopes for a better future for humanity. Looking at 2006, unfortunately there is no way to be hopeful about 2007. Moreover, the coming year seems to be even more difficult for the course of international politics. This year has been marked by the total failure of President Bush's dream to eradicate international terrorism and to create a pro-American Middle East. The American intervention started with the goals of creating a peaceful and democratic Middle East and ended with sheer chaos and civil war. The year 2006 has also become the year where the Bush administration finally admitted its failures in Iraq. Listening to what Rumsfeld and Bush are saying now on Iraq demonstrates that even the strongest

supporters of the war in Iraq have awakened. However, in the new period to come, there is no way of turning a negative picture into a better one. The sectarian conflict in Iraq has already become regional. When you add the situation in Lebanon as well as in Palestine, it is obvious that the year 2007 will be even more disastrous."

Intellectuals Issue a Joint Declaration on the Kurdish Issue  
Hurriyet, Milliyet and Radikal wrote that 100 academics and 320 intellectuals issued a joint declaration and called for a "civilian solution" to the Kurdish issue. They invited the public to think about the reasons that led to violence and suggested making arrangements for the youngsters hiding in the mountains to legally come down. The declaration said violence did not help to solve the problem, but that, on the contrary, violence was harmful for everyone. Among those who signed the declaration, were Yasar Kemal, Adalet Agaoglu, Prof. Baskin Oran and Prof. Dogu Ergil.

#### Operations against Corruption in 14 Provinces

All papers reported over fifty contractors, including two bureaucrats from the Health and Public Works Ministries and Ankara Metropolitan Municipality and were detained under allegations of corruption in tenders. The police were tipped off by Metropolitan Mayor Melih Gokcek.

#### TV Highlights

NTV (6 a.m.)

#### Domestic News

- ANAP Leader Erkan Mumcu has to pay 10,000 YTL compensation to Prime Minister Erdogan for insulting the Prime Minister in a speech in Parliament

ANKARA 00006730 002 OF 002

- New Political Initiative, a new party headed by Ertugrul Gunay and Mehmet Bekaroglu, has released a written statement to reject allegations that it was an Islamic Left party.

- A 4.8 magnitude quake was been reported in the Aegean.

- PM Erdogan kicked off the construction of a tunnel under the Bosphorus

#### International News

- 13 people were killed and dozens injured when a suicide bomber blew himself up among a crowd of police volunteers in Baghdat

- Europeans have offered to ease a proposed travel ban on Iranian officials in an effort to get Russian support for a UN resolution barring Tehran from importing dangerous nuclear materials.

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